



Montana

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New Data Available on Montana's Labor Markets

(Helena) There are 261,000 adults in Montana that could be available for new job opportunities, according to a report commissioned by the Montana Department of Labor and Industry. "Montana's most valuable resource is our workers," said Governor Brian Schweitzer. "A ready and viable workforce is a key part of Montana's growing energy sector."

The report is based on data gathered in 2008 by the UM Bureau of Business and Economic Research (BBER). Survey researchers gathered data over 2008 to estimate the number of workers willing to switch jobs or even add a second job in response to new opportunities. The survey found that nearly a third of Montana's available workforce at the time were willing to entertain new employment opportunities. This information can be used to attract new business and industry to the state.

"This data gives us a good baseline to assess skills in the available workforce, so that we can match workers to employers for emerging jobs. The national investment into our economy is going to rebuild our infrastructure, retool industry, recharge energy development, and retrain workers for the 21st century," says Labor Commissioner Keith Kelly.

The survey also found that availability varied by regions of the state. It shows that there were a higher percentage of available workers in southwest Montana and lower availability in the north-central region of the state. The findings also include extensive statistical analysis of Montana's labor supply and are broken down into three distinct geographies- the state as a whole, five regional areas in Montana, and the state's seven American Indian Reservations.

More than 6,200 people were contacted for the survey both through landline and cell phone calls from January to September of 2008. The questionnaire addressed labor market status, availability, training and other information of relevance to current and future employers and was similar to a BBER labor market survey conducted in 2002. To see the report in its entirety, log onto www.ourfactsyourfuture.org

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